



Safeguarding Policy

We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our learners and to maintain a professional attitude of *it could happen here* where safeguarding is concerned.

Skillcert is committed to safeguarding learners and promoting children's welfare and expects all contracted for services staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. Everyone has a responsibility to **act without delay** to protect learners by reporting anything that might suggest a child (or adult) is being abused or neglected. It is our willingness to work safely and challenge inappropriate behaviours that underpins this commitment. Skillcert seeks to work in partnership with families and other agencies to improve the outcomes for children, young people and adults who are vulnerable or in need.

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.' ([Keeping Children Safe in Education](#))

All staff are encouraged to report any concerns that they have and **not see these as insignificant**. On occasions, a referral is justified by a **single incident** such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, **concerns accumulate over a period of time** and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, **it is crucial that staff record and pass on concerns** in accordance with this policy to allow the Designated Safeguarding Lead to build up a picture and access support for the child at the earliest opportunity.

We maintain a professional attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When there are concerns about the welfare of a learner, staff members will always act in the best interests of the learner. This policy has been developed in- conjunction with our culture of prevention, protection and support and will be linked with all our policies e.g. anti-bullying, online safety, health and safety, anti- radicalisation. We will continue to maintain an ethos where learners feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and feel safe. Learners at Skillcert are encouraged to talk freely with any contracted for services staff member at Skillcert, if they are worried or concerned about something. This includes any learners we are responsible for under sub-contracting arrangements.

If Skillcert has sub-contractors, they would undergo annual due diligence to ensure they have the necessary policies in place and contractually are obliged to meet all the necessary requirements including staff training.

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to clarify Skillcert's role in the safeguarding and protection of children, young people, vulnerable adults and adults at risk and to promote their welfare. The purpose is to bring about better outcomes for all learners by facilitating open communication channels and clear accountability in interagency working arrangements. By implementing the policy it will help all learners achieve the below outcomes:

- Are committed – developing a robust culture of vigilance
- Build resilience – raising awareness of safeguarding and child protection issues, and equipping children & young people (and adults) with the language and skills to keep themselves safe
- Establish a safe environment – in which children & young people (and adults) can work and learn and develop within an ethos of openness and are taught to treat each other with respect, to feel safe, to have a voice and are listened to
- Support vulnerable learners – supporting learners who have been abused, have witnessed violence towards others or may be vulnerable to abuse
- Prevent unsuitable people – from working with children & young people by ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with our children. And to maintain an active vigilance thereafter
- Make a positive contribution – know and understand how to ensure those around our learners and in their care are safeguarded and how to report if there are concerns

This policy applies to the entire Skillcert caseload including all young people aged 13-18 and vulnerable adults, who form part of our statutory responsibilities, specifically those young people who have a physical, sensory or learning disability. Throughout this document the generic phrase learners will be used where possible. Where the phrase "Child" or "Child Protection Procedure" applies these will also apply to vulnerable adults. We recognise that any learner could potentially be a victim of abuse.

The aim is to follow the procedures set out by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) by:

- Knowing that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners is everyone's responsibility, and the voice of the learner is evident
- Protecting our learners from maltreatment
- Establishing a safe environment in which our learners can learn and develop within an ethos of openness
- Preventing impairment of our learner's health or development
- Ensuring young people at Skillcert grow up in circumstances consistent with the provisions of safe and effective care.
- Offering learners, a balanced curriculum including PHSE, healthy relationship education, online safety, sexting, peer on peer abuse, sexual harassment
- Offering learners, a balanced curriculum through online activities, enabling them to

enhance their safeguarding skills and knowledge whilst understanding the risks.

- Understanding that no single professional can have the full picture of a learner's needs and circumstances. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their family, has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- Undertaking the role so as to enable learners at Skillcert to have best outcomes.
- Ensuring as a provider we have a clear understanding of our staff's knowledge and understanding and embedding safeguarding through clear systems of communication and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) so that safeguarding is a robust element of our provision.

This policy provides guidance to all adults working within the business, whether paid or voluntary or directly employed by Skillcert or a third party.

- This policy is available on our website & within the [Safeguarding Padlet](#)
- We also inform learners about this policy when they enroll in learning.
- This policy will be reviewed in full by the Board on an annual basis or sooner should legislation/guidance change.
- This policy sets out how Skillcert discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners. Our policy applies to all staff; paid and unpaid
- The policy is provided to all contracted for services staff and volunteers at induction, alongside our Staff code of conduct. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One & Annex A of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- All new staff receive a safeguarding induction with the Safeguarding Lead and all staff have to complete the necessary mandatory training

All staff working with learners must be able to identify when someone may be likely to suffer significant harm through abuse or neglect and how to act upon concerns by referring them to Children's or adults Social Care. In addition all staff must ensure that learners are supported with e- safety and are aware of threats surrounding this.

All agencies and their staff should be aware of internal arrangements consistent with the child and vulnerable adult's protection procedures (Section B), and the roles of key staff within the organisation.

Roles, Responsibilities and Structure

All staff delivering services in children and young people have a responsibility under the [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

We also have an ethical and moral duty to protect those adults that could become vulnerable or who are vulnerable to abuse due to the nature of the sectors we deliver education within.

Tutors, Learner Engagement,

All contracted for services staff have a legal responsibility for the identification and reporting of individual abuse and for safeguarding the welfare of children, young people, vulnerable adults and adults at risk.

Advice and support should be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, especially with regard to consent and referral issues. If the DSL is not available staff should contact the Deputy Designated Safeguarding.

There are clear procedures for the reporting and recording of information which need to be followed.

All Staff

Where a safeguarding or well-being concern is raised, all staff should report in the first instance via telephone to either the DSL or the Deputy DSL. Following discussion staff will be advised to log the concern via the MyConcern application. Here the complaint should be logged with sufficient detail including name of individual, times and locations of incidents and full details of the concern and any action taken.

The reporting staff member should then take no further action until guided by the safeguarding team or if tasks are assigned through the MyConcern app.

If an URGENT concern is raised (where learners, staff or service users are at immediate risk) the DSL or Deputy DSL should be contacted by phone immediately. If neither are available a call to 999 should be made and the reporting staff member should make contact with the DSL or Deputy DSL as soon as possible to advise them of the situation and action taken.

Line Manager

Line Managers have the responsibility to ensure that staff are familiar with all safeguarding procedures and keep all training up to date.

Line Managers should offer the external counseling service to staff that have had a particularly disturbing disclosure (for information contact the DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for keeping MyConcern up to date and triaging all cases to the appropriate individuals through the system. The DSL is responsible for ensuring that only those who require access to each case hold it.

All cases will be held in MyConcern as the central record and will be used to evaluate practices by the safeguarding committee to improve processes and procedures.

Safeguarding Designated Team

Victoria Sylvester (CEO)– Governing Board Representative

Victoria is the board safeguarding lead with responsibility for Skillcert’s Safeguarding Strategy. Through governance and oversight, she ensures that this is central to Skillcert’s vision and is evident in all practices. She ensures that all board members are kept up to date with all safeguarding and ensure training and development of the board takes place. Victoria provides advice and guidance to the safeguarding team and is referred to for challenging cases and referrals to external sources. Responsible for referrals to outside agencies.

Nichola McCauley (Head of Quality) – Designated Safeguarding Lead – Nichola.McCauley@skillcert.co.uk

Nichola is the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns and is responsible for MyConcern including triaging concerns and assigning case owners, team members and tasks. Nichola will provide monthly updates to board and SMT with regards to cases and lessons learned. Nichola will chair the safeguarding/Wellbeing Board. Nichola leads on Prevent.

Overall responsibility for Individual Protection issues in Skillcert, making sure they are maintained, monitored and evaluated.

Responsible for keeping central confidential files Contactable out of hours in exceptional circumstances.

Responsible for ensuring Safeguarding and Individual Protection procedures and policies are kept up to date.

Responsible for contributing to Serious Case Reviews and implementing any resulting action plans.

Amy Oliver (Head of Compliance) – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – amy.oliver@skillcert.co.uk – 07719 058 492

Amy is second point of contact and will lead on safeguarding in the absence of Nichola McCauley.

Key Definitions

Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare is defined as:

- Protecting children, young people, vulnerable adults and adults at risk from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's/adults at risk health or development
- Ensuring that children/adults at risk are growing up in circumstances consistent with
- The provision of safe and effective care
- Undertaking that role to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully
- Be vigilant about radicalisation; that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues will not happen here and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our learners are safe from harm.

All contracted for services staff and volunteers in Skillcert have an awareness of safeguarding issues through regular training and briefings, some of which are listed below. We enable our staff to be aware that these behaviours put learners in danger. All staff are aware of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is the expert within our business and is there to support staff, sub-contractors, volunteers and the Board further.

- Abuse
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Children and the courts
- Children with family members in prison
- Children who are absent from education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- County Lines
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gambling Addiction
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Grooming for crime
- Sexual Harassment Settings are to assume sexual harassment is taking place as per Ofsted Review and KCSIE put appropriate measures in place
- Homelessness
- Mental health
- Missing children and adults strategy

- Modern slavery *
- Online safety
- Peer on peer abuse
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Sexting/sharing nudes or semi-nude images or video
- Sexual or criminal exploitation
- Trafficking

**Modern Slavery – whilst not in scope to be subject to the Modern Slavery Act, as organisation that delivers in a sector with high recruitment needs, the risk of learners being subject to potential slavery conditions is high and therefore staff are provided with training and information to understand how to recognise the possible signs a learner may be subject to this and that it is delivered to learners as part of safeguarding training.*

Specific Definitions:

E-safety is electronic safety which can be associated with websites such as Facebook, Twitter, msn and any other social networking site. E-safety also applies to mobile phones also where learners should be aware of what to do should they be subject to Sexting. Learners should understand GDPR and how to protect their personal data.

Child Protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. The term is used to refer to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm.

Vulnerable adults individuals who have (a) a dependency upon others in the performance of, or a requirement for assistance in the performance of, basic physical functions; (b) severe impairment in the ability to communicate with others; or. (c) impairment in a person's ability to protect himself from assault, abuse or neglect.

Physical Abuse – may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to an individual. Factitious Disorder is also classed as physical abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. The situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's by proxy.

Indicators

- Blood in whites of eyes, small bruises on head, bruising on rib cage, maybe associated with shaking.
- Burns and scolds on hands, feet, buttocks, groin. Cigarette burns.
- Linear marks, weal marks. Bruised eyes or ears.
- Multiple bruising. Grip/slap marks. Bite Marks.
- Injuries found to be at different stages. Unconscious Individual.
- Injuries/fractures in individuals who are not mobile.

*Nb This is not an exhaustive list

Emotional Abuse / Psychological abuse

Emotional and psychological abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of an individual which causes severe and persistent side effects on the individual's emotional development. Most forms of abuse will generally include psychological or emotional signs and symptoms. It may involve conveying to the individual that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on individual. These may include interactions that are beyond the individual's development capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the individual participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing individuals to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of individual. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of ill treatment of a individual, though it can still occur alone.

Indicators

- Lack of self-esteem.
- Withdrawn, aggressive behavior, self harm, mutilation, substance abuse and suicide attempts.
- Eating disorders.
- Degrading or humiliating punishments.
- Children who appear unused to praise or encouragement. Children who are rejected by a parent/carer/sibling.
- Bullying.

*Nb This is not an exhaustive list

Neglect and acts of omission

Neglect can also be a form of emotional abuse, many of the signs and symptoms will be the same as outlined above, Acts of omission are when knowingly someone could be putting a child, young person or vulnerable adults at risk or they are aware of the abuse but it is not reported. Such instances include, ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health and social care and withholding the necessities in life.

Indicators:

- Poor appearance and hygiene
- Health and Development problems
- Housing and family issues
- Changes in behaviour

*Nb This is not an exhaustive list

Sexual Abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person or adults at risk to take part in sexual activities including prostitution, whether or not the individual is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may involve non-contact activities such as involving individuals in looking at, or in the production of sexual online images, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging individuals to act in sexually inappropriate ways.

Indicators:

- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior.
- Excessive sexual play and masturbation.
- Sexually transmitted diseases. Pregnancy – especially concealed. Children who witness intimate sex acts.
- Self-harm/suicide attempts/substance abuse. Eating disorders.
- Nightmares/disturbed sleep patterns. Wetting, soiling/smearing excreta.
- Significant changes in behavior/personality. Persistent offending, non-school attendance.

*Nb This is not an exhaustive list

Financial or material Abuse

This may include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure when dealing with wills or inheritance, financial transactions and claiming benefits that they are not entitled to.

Indicators:

- Loss of money from wallet or purse
- Lack of money to buy basic items
- Bills not been paid when money has been entrusted to a third-party
- Inadequate clothing
- Unexplained withdrawal of cash

*Nb This is not an exhaustive list

Discriminatory abuse

This could include bullying and harassment based on the age, sex, disability, race, religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation. The indicators are same as those identified in emotional abuse.

Protection of Children in Specific Circumstances

Children have a right to be protected including in the following circumstances - Sexual activity of young people under the age of 18.

- Female genital mutilation.
- Protecting children from forced marriages.
- Protection from Radicalisation

Radicalisation

There are a number of behaviours that might indicate that an individual is at risk of being radicalised or exposed to extreme views. Such behaviours may include:

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists;
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;
- Day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred on an extremist ideology, group or cause;
- Loss of interest in others and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;
- Possession of materials or symbols associated with an extremist cause;
- Attempts to introduce others to the group/cause;
- Communications with others that suggests identification with a group, cause or ideology;
- Using names/language ranging from insulting to derogatory for members of another group;

• Increase in prejudice-related incidents committed by that person – these may include:

- physical or verbal assault;
- provocative behaviour;
- damage to property;
- derogatory name calling;
- possession of prejudice-related materials;

- prejudice related ridicule or name calling;
- inappropriate forms of address;
- refusal to co-operate;
- attempts to recruit to prejudice-related organisations;
- condoning or supporting violence towards others.

This list is in no sense intended either to be exhaustive or any more than a description of possible consistent behaviours – rather than proofs – of radicalisation.

Domestic Violence

Does your partner, ex-partner or someone you live with:

- cut you off from family and friends and intentionally isolate you?
- bully, threaten, or control you?
- take control of your finances?
- monitor or limit your use of technology?
- physically and/or sexually abuse you?

Domestic abuse is not always physical violence. It can also include:

- coercive control and 'gaslighting'
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- threats and intimidation
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, sexuality or background.

Indicators

If you believe that you are a victim of domestic abuse, there are signs that you can look out for including:

- being withdrawn, or being isolated from your family and friends
- having bruises, burns or bite marks on you
- having your finances controlled, or not being given enough to buy food, medication or pay bills

- not being allowed to leave your house, or stopped from going to college or work
- having your internet or social media use monitored, or someone else reading your texts, emails or letters
- being repeatedly belittled, put down or told you are worthless
- being pressured into sex or sexual contact
- being told that abuse is your fault, or that you're overreacting

Child on Child Abuse

Definition: Inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature including [physical](#), [sexual](#), or [emotional](#) abuse, [exploitation](#), [sexual harassment](#), all forms of [bullying](#), coercive control, hazing/initiation rituals between children and young people, both on and offline (including that which is within intimate personal relationships).

Indicators:

- Absence from school or lack of interest in school activities.
- Physical injuries.
- Mental or emotional ill-health.
- Becoming withdrawn.
- Poor self-esteem.
- Tiredness.
- Alcohol or other substance misuse.
- Changes in behaviour.
- Inappropriate behaviour for their age.
- Displaying harmful behaviour towards others.

For the purpose of this guidance, the term 'child' refers to any young person under 18 years old.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which:

- violates your dignity
- makes you feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated
- creates a hostile or offensive environment

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation. Individuals may be trafficked into, out of or within the UK, and they may be trafficked for a number of reasons including sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude and organ harvesting.

The Home Office estimates there are 13,000 victims and survivors of modern slavery in the UK; 55% of these are female and 35% of all victims are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Recognising Abuse – General Considerations

All staff should be alert to signs that an individual may be at risk of significant harm, regardless of age, sex, culture, religion, and social class, as individual abuse occurs regardless of these factors.

All staff should reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by

reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

- Identification of individual abuse may be difficult; it normally requires both medical and social assessment.
- Different types of individual abuse could be present at the same time, e.g. an individual who is being sexually abused may be physically abused. Staff need to be alert to signs of other types of abuse.
- Always listen carefully to the individual – pay particular attention to any spontaneous statement. In the case of an individual with limited language, pay attention to their signing or behavior or play. Be aware of body language and scribbling/doodling.
- Any delay in seeking medical assistance, or none being sought at all for an ill individual could be an indicator of abuse.
- Beware if the explanation of an accident is vague, lacking in details, is inconsistent to the injury or varies with each telling.
- Take note of the appropriateness of the response of parents/carers.
- Observe a child's interaction with parent particularly wariness or fear or watchfulness.
- Any history or unexplained illness/injuries requires the most careful scrutiny.
- Beware if there are indicators of a history of domestic violence. Violence towards adults shall also indicate violence towards children and can itself be emotionally abusive.
- Individuals who are being abused often do not disclose, for a variety of reasons, so in our professional capacity we have to be vigilant to possible signals.

Be aware at all times that Skillcert is responsible for reporting incidents of suspected abuse and not investigating them.

Staff are mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's social care.

Significant Harm

The term 'significant harm' is important as it is the point at which Children's Social Care have a statutory duty to put in motion Section 47 enquiries under the 1989 Children Act. **It is the duty of CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE to determine whether the child is at risk of significant harm, not Skillcert.** However, we need to have an understanding of what it means to inform our referral procedures.

There are no absolute criteria for deciding what constitutes significant harm. It requires judgment based on the nature of the abuse, and the effects of that abuse on the individual.

In order to help us decide how severe the harm is the following factors should be considered:

- The degree and extent of the abuse and neglect.
- The duration and frequency of the abuse and neglect
- The extent of pre-meditation
- The degree of threat or coercion

Recording, Sharing of Information and Consent Issues Recording

Information

In the climate of 'working together' with other agencies, young people, adults and families, information will have to be shared, so it is important that our records are kept up to date at all times.

Skillcert applies the R's framework to safeguarding concerns:

- Recognise
- Record
- Report
- Refer

These steps are crucial for identifying and responding to potential harm or abuse, ensuring the safety and well-being of vulnerable individuals.

It is important that MyConcern is updated as and when information is received, and with any action taken in following these procedures. As with other information recorded on the

safeguarding log, we need to bear in mind that a young person or adult can request their records, so until official 'consent' has been sought we need to be sensitive as to what we record. It is the Designated Persons responsibility to maintain the log and keep all records.

Any written records you make for yourself must be submitted to the Designated Person who will hold them centrally with all records in a secure place in case they are needed at a later date.

The Designated Person should keep a 'confidential' file containing all Individual Protection matters for the organisation.

Sharing Information

Important statutory duties in relation to adults at risk and children in need cannot be met without **effective** and **appropriate** sharing of information. For agencies to work together to the benefit of individuals, they must be able to share relevant information.

However, sharing of information should take place according to the principles of good practice and on a need-to-know basis. When a request for information is made we need to be clear about **why** the information is needed and the **way** it is going to be used.

The General Data Protection Act places a duty on organisations and individuals with regards to processing personal information fairly and lawfully. As a provider we **adhere to data protection** yet we **do not allow this to stand in our way** in the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of our learners.

Seeking Consent for Making a Referral or Sharing Information

Prior to information being shared with other agencies, or a referral being made, consent should normally be sought from the young person and/or from one parent/carer with agreed parental responsibility.

However, there are certain important circumstances where consent should not be sought. These are:

- If this would put the child or young person at greater risk of significant harm.
- Interfere with criminal enquiries.
- Raise concern about the safety of staff.
- Reasons not to seek consent have to be recorded on the records and written on the referral form.

As a 16-19 service we will come across the situation where a young person is sufficiently mature enough to understand choices and their consequences, and will not give consent for referral, especially if they believe it will make their situation worse. This is a particularly difficult situation. You will have to use your judgment as to whether it is appropriate and lawful to refer without

consent. Advice must be sought from your team manager and Children's Social Care. You must inform the young person if you decide to refer.

A parent's or young person's lack of agreement should not prevent you from making a referral. If they do not agree, and you decide you need to refer, then you must inform them accordingly.

The Designated Person is responsible for making any referrals.

Support for Staff

Although staff should be aware of their responsibilities and procedures for individual protection issues, appropriate support should be sought to help throughout that process.

The senior designated person will help in more complex or serious cases.

Children's Social Care, or other designated 'contacts' can be contacted for advice as appropriate (see contact name and addresses)

Training

Effective training is the key to carrying out our responsibilities of promoting and safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. Staff need to be trained on how to identify an individual in need, and what subsequent action to take.

Training takes place on a variety of levels and will depend upon the needs of the staff concerned.

- All staff will receive a safeguarding induction on entry to the business.
- Front line staff/Line managers that have direct access to learners will hold at least Level 2 in safeguarding, prevent and equality & diversity.
- The Designated Person(s) and HR Manager will hold a Level 3 qualification in safeguarding, prevent and equality and diversity.
- All contracted for services staff have a duty to update their CPD in relation to safeguarding on an annual basis. This is monitored through electronic staff training records.
- Safeguarding will be addressed and updated at each delivery team and staff meeting, which will inform and update staff CPD.
- All board members will undertake safeguarding governance training.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The designated persons will conduct a monthly review of our Safeguarding and Child Protection systems and policies at the Safeguarding Committee. This will include consideration of specific cases dealt with by staff in the last month. The resulting information – including feedback from staff, will be used by the designated person to inform any improvements. Feedback will also be obtained from the learners in relation to the policy and their understanding of safeguarding that we cover at induction.

Feedback on the safeguarding policy and its implementation will be provided at management meetings where decisions can be made if specific items need to be addressed or policies amended.

Dealing with a Disclosure

When a learner tells me about abuse they have suffered, what should I remember?

- Stay calm
 - Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment
 - Reassure the learner. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you
 - Never agree or promise to keep it a secret. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the learner know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why
 - Tell her/him that you believe them.
 - Tell the learner that it is not her/his fault
 - Encourage the learner to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information
-
- Use the acronym **T.E.D**: **T**ell me. **E**xplain. **D**escribe
 - Listen and remember
 - Check that you have understood correctly what the learner is trying to tell you
 - Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected
 - It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender
 - Be aware that the learner may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record in writing, all you have heard, though not necessarily at the time of disclosure.
 - At the end of the conversation, tell the learner again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know

- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the learner's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations. (dates, times, names mentioned and to whom the information was passed need to be clearly recorded)
- Contact the DSL or Deputy DSL to discuss the concern
- Login to MyConcern and detail all of the information written down into the 'Report a Concern' section. This should include all relevant details including names of any individual concerned.
- If the disclosure relates to a physical injury do not photograph the injury, but record in writing as much detail as possible and use the body map function within MyConcern

SECTION B**PROCEDURE FOR DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE BY LEARNER
ALL SITUATIONS**

(1) The guidance process should normally be kept confidential, and the privacy of our learners respected. However, there are limitations to this confidentiality and learners need to be made aware of this. If a learner reveals something which leads you to believe they were at risk of, or have already suffered significant harm, then you cannot keep this confidential, and the learner needs to be aware of this.

(2) If during any contact with a learner it appears they may be about to disclose an issue in relation to Individual Protection, ensure you remind learners of the limits of confidentiality.

If the learner continues to disclose to you, use your training/experience to listen and note all significant detail of the discussion. Contact the DSL/Deputy DSL to discuss concern. Login to MyConcern and detail all of the information written down into the 'Report a Concern' section. This should include all relevant details.

(3) If it is a child, enquire, sensitively, if there are other siblings in the household, as the living situation needs to be included when referring to Children's/adults Social Care.

(4) Confirm with the learner that you will have to record this information, manually and on the safeguarding log and that you may have to share this with other colleagues and agencies and will involve a referral to Children's/adults Social Care.

PROCEDURE WHERE YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT A LEARNER

(1) Take an informal approach initially and seek an explanation for concerns with the learner without raising questions of abuse.

(2) Gather as much information as possible from the individual, other colleagues who may have had some involvement with learner and other agencies. Investigate whether there are others that maybe at risk.

(3) Contact the DSL/Deputy DSL to discuss concern. Login to MyConcern and detail all of the information written down into the 'Report a Concern' section. This should include all relevant details including names of any individual concerned.

(4) In an emergency situation where the DSL and DDSL are unavailable and there is immediate risk of harm, contact 999. Update the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible with the actions taken.

**PROCEDURE FOR CONCERNS RAISED BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN INDIVIDUAL
THEMSELVES AND YOU**

(1) If the person concerned is a colleague within Skillcert refer them to these procedures and contact the DSL/Deputy DSL.

(2) If the person concerned is a colleague within another institution refer them to their own line manager and their Protection procedures. Also update the DSL/Deputy DSL of the actions taken.

(3) If the person concerned is a parent/carer or member of the public refer them to CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE for advice. Also update the DSL/Deputy DSL of the actions taken.

PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IF YOU RECEIVE AN ALLEGATION AGAINST A MEMBER OF SKILLCERT STAFF

(1) Where a learner makes make an allegation against a Skillcert member of staff, contact the DSL/Deputy DSL to discuss the concern, then log the concer on MyConcern.

(2) The member of staff may not be automatically suspended, but we have a duty to make preliminary enquiries before a referral to CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE (Children only). These must not interfere with possible investigations and a referral should be made if there is any doubt.

(3) If another agency receives an allegation against a member of Skillcert staff, they should contact the DSL or HR Manager direct.

(4) If a member of Skillcert staff receives an allegation against a member of another agency, staff should in the first instance discuss this with the DSL/Deputy DSL.

(5) If an allegation is made against the Line Manager, then refer direct to with the DSL/Deputy DSL.

(6) Follow guidelines in personal safety policy on lone working and good professional practice when working in a one-to-one situation. Apply your experience and judgment when dealing with interactions with learners, in order to minimise the possibility of allegations occurring.

Section C

Online Safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school, college or training provider to protect and educate the whole school or college community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be into the following areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.
- **Commerce:** Commerce is about the risk from things like online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams. Children and young people may be exposed to these risks directly. Schools should also consider how the risk from commerce applies to staff.
- **Disinformation:** the deliberate creation and spread of false or misleading content, such as fake news.
- **Misinformation:** the unintentional spread of this false or misleading content
- **Conspiracy Theories:** a belief that some influential or controlling organization or group is secretly responsible for a notable event or phenomenon.

As part of our on-going commitment to the safeguarding and protection of our learners, we use filtering software on our network and active monitoring of blocked sites which staff and learners are trying to visit. Regular reporting to the DSL should take place via the IT Lead.

Throughout our personal development curriculum, learners cover aspects of staying safe online and using technologies responsibly.

The creation, downloading, distribution and copying of pornographic images of children are child abuse and are criminal offences. They are classed as gross misconduct and will lead to instant dismissal for staff and Behaviour Support process with possible exclusion for learners. If you become aware of the creation, downloading, distribution or copying of pornographic images of children: contact the DSL immediately, or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Remote education, virtual lessons and live streaming guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education>

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/video-conferencing-services-using-them-securely>

Designated Safeguarding Lead

There will always be a nominated DSL or deputy DSL available, either on site or contactable by telephone, email or video calling. The name and contact details of the DSL and DSD are clearly identified within this policy. Learners or parents of learners (age dependant) should contact the DSL or DDSL.

Learners and staff on-site.

Skillcert will continue to be a safe place for learners to attend.

All contracted for services staff or learners attending any of our sites will be expected to adhere to the outlined Health & Safety procedures as identified via associated risk assessments which will be fully explained upon entry. All visitors entering on site will be recorded as part of track and trace protocol.

Working in partnership

We continue to work closely with our local safeguarding partners and local agencies.

Useful Documents

The revised interagency guidance is based on:

The Education and Training (Welfare of Children) Act 2021 - <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2633>

Keeping Children Safe in Education –

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2>

Domestic Violence Act 2021 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-overarching-factsheet>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help>

Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years Education and Skills Settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills>

Prevent Duty Guidance – <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Work-based learning National Guidance – DfE – Prevent <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/work-based-learners-and-the-prevent-statutory-duty/guidance-for-providers-on-work-based-learners-and-the-prevent-statutory-duty>

CONTEST Strategy (Prevent)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest-2018>

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/counter-terrorism-and-security-bill#related->

Equality Act 2010

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/9/contents/enacted>

Vetting and Barring Scheme Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Education Act 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/contents/enacted>

Every Child Matters 2004 updated 2007 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/every-child-matters>

Children Act 2004 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Working Together to Safeguard Children - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Human Rights Act 2010 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

GDPR Regulations 2018 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation>

The Care Act 2014 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-2014-part-1-factsheets/care-act-factsheets>

Modern Slavery Act 2015 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/modern-slavery>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) - <https://www.endfgm.eu/female-genital-mutilation/what-is-fgm/>

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>

Review Procedures:

A review of the Safeguarding Policy will be completed annually.

Current version: V6
Reviewed by: Nichola McCauley
Issued: September 2025
Next review date: September 2025
Signed by: (Name & role)  Nichola McCauley – Head of Quality and DSL